

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) An inconspicuous semi-permanent hearing device, comprising:

a sealing retainer adapted to be retained in the bony portion of a wearer's ear canal along the longitudinal axis and in direct contact with the walls thereof when said hearing device is fully seated within the ear canal of the wearer;

a receiver assembly including a receiver for supplying acoustic signals processed by said hearing device to the tympanic membrane of the wearer, said receiver assembly being arranged and adapted to mate with said sealing retainer for positioning in the bony portion of the ear canal;

a microphone assembly adapted to be positioned medially past the aperture of the ear canal, said microphone assembly including a microphone for receiving incoming acoustic signals for processing by said hearing device;

a battery assembly including a battery for powering said hearing device; and

a flexible connector electrically and mechanically connecting said battery assembly to said receiver assembly and said microphone assembly, the flexible connector comprising a flexible film, the connector encapsulating a portion of at least one of the receiver assembly, the battery assembly or the microphone assembly;

whereby said hearing device is adapted to be inserted entirely within a wearer's ear canal medially past the aperture thereof for long-term wear therein.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Previously Presented) The inconspicuous semi-permanent hearing device of claim 1, wherein said sealing retainer is sufficiently soft and yielding to conform itself to the

shape of the ear canal in said bony portion for long-term retention therein when said hearing device is fully seated in the ear canal.

4. (Previously Presented) The inconspicuous semi-permanent hearing device of claim 1, further comprising an air gap between said sealing retainer and said receiver assembly.

5.-36. (Cancelled)

37. (Currently Amended) The inconspicuous semi-permanent hearing device of claim 3, wherein said sealing retainer is composed of a compressible material from ~~[[a]]the~~ group ~~including consisting of~~ polyurethane foam~~[[,]]~~ and silicone, ~~or like material.~~

38-44. (Cancelled)

45. (Previously Presented) The inconspicuous semi-permanent hearing device of claim 1, wherein said sealing retainer is provided in an assortment of different sizes and shapes to accommodate the dimensions of the ear canal of the individual wearer.

46-48. (Cancelled)

49. (Previously Presented) The inconspicuous semi-permanent hearing device of claim 1, wherein said receiver assembly is adapted to protrude medially beyond the contact area of said sealing retainer when said device is seated in the ear canal.

50-97. (Cancelled)

98. (Currently Amended) A semi-permanent hearing device adapted for insertion and long-term wear in the ear canal, comprising:

a core assembly comprising:

transducer means for converting sound waves incident thereon to audible acoustic signals to be imparted on the tympanic membrane of the wearer, and

a battery for powering said core assembly; and

a sealing retainer fabricated and adapted to seat within and occlude the bony region of the ear canal and to snugly support said core assembly along the longitudinal axis of the ear canal in said bony region when the hearing device is fully seated in the ear canal, whereby said sealing retainer provides acoustic sealing of said bony region of the ear canal to prevent feedback,

said core assembly including a portion adapted to extend laterally and non-occludingly within the ear canal medially past the aperture thereof when the hearing device is fully seated in the ear canal said core assembly and said sealing retainer adapted to position a medial end of the core assembly within 2 mm of the tympanic membrane for long-term wear of the hearing device in the ear canal.

99. (Previously Presented) The semi-permanent hearing device of claim **98**, wherein said core assembly and said sealing retainer are selectively separable from one another.

100. (Original) The semi-permanent hearing device of claim **98**, wherein said sealing retainer is sufficiently soft and yielding to conform itself to the shape of the ear canal in said bony region for long-term retention in a seated position therein when said device is fully inserted into the ear canal.

101. (Previously Presented) The semi-permanent hearing device of claim **98**, further comprising an air gap between said sealing retainer and said core assembly.

102. (Original) The semi-permanent hearing device of claim **98**, further comprising moisture-proof encapsulation of said device.

103. (Original) The semi-permanent hearing device of claim **102**, wherein said encapsulation has a wall thickness not exceeding 0.3 mm.

104. (Original) The semi-permanent hearing device of claim **98**, wherein said transducer means includes a microphone and a receiver each having a respective port for passage of acoustic signal therethrough, and further including at least one debris guard for at least one of

said microphone port and said receiver port without substantial interference to passage of acoustic signal through the respective port.

105. (Previously Presented) The semi-permanent hearing device of claim **104**, wherein said at least one debris guard is waterproof.

106-110. (Cancelled)

111. (Original) The semi-permanent hearing device of claim **98**, wherein said core assembly comprises an air vent.

112-113. (Cancelled)

114. (Original) The semi-permanent hearing device of claim **98**, including programming means for selectively adjusting electroacoustic parameters of said device.

115. (Currently Amended) The semi-permanent hearing device of claim **114**, wherein said programming means includes a programmer external to said device and adjustment means internal to said device responsive to programming signals from said programm[[m]]er for performing said selective adjustment.

116. (Original) The semi-permanent hearing device of claim **100**, wherein said sealing retainer is composed of a compressible material.

117. (Original) The semi-permanent hearing device of claim **116**, wherein said compressible material is responsive to compression thereof to undergo delayed expansion over time to assume a snug fit within said ear canal.

118. (Currently Amended) The semi-permanent hearing device of claim **98**, wherein said sealing retainer is made of polyurethane foam ~~or like material~~.

119. (Currently Amended) The semi-permanent hearing device of claim **98**, wherein said sealing retainer is made of silicone ~~or like material~~.

120. (Previously Presented) The semi-permanent hearing device of claim **98**, wherein said sealing retainer is removable from said device.

121. (Original) The semi-permanent hearing device of claim **98**, wherein said sealing retainer is one among an assortment of sealing retainers of different sizes and shapes supplied with said hearing device to accommodate the dimensions of the ear canal of the individual wearer.

122. (Cancelled)

123. (Previously Presented) The semi-permanent hearing device of claim **98**, wherein said transducer means comprises a receiver assembly protruding medially beyond the contact area of said sealing retainer.

124-140. (Cancelled)

141. (New) The inconspicuous semi-permanent hearing device of claim **1**, wherein the flexible connector has a ribbon shape.

142. (New) The inconspicuous semi-permanent hearing device of claim **1**, wherein the flexible connector has a tapered shape over a length of the connector.

143. (New) The inconspicuous semi-permanent hearing device of claim **1**, wherein the flexible connector comprises an electrical wire.